

## **Statement by Supervisor Don Knabe**

### **August 9, 2011**

In March of this year, the 2010 census data was released, indicating that the County's total population grew by nearly 300,000 during the last decade. The census data also showed that there have been population shifts among the County's supervisorial districts. Some districts, such as the First District, decreased in population, while other districts, most notably the Fifth District, increased in population.

As a result of these population changes, the County's population must be equalized among the supervisorial districts in accordance with the one-person, one-vote principle requiring that residents of the districts are afforded equality of representation. In making its recommendations to this Board, the BRC was required to consider population equality under the one-person, one vote principle, as well as compliance with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, the federal statute which prohibits any practice or procedure that, interacting with social and other historical conditions, impairs the ability of minority voters to elect candidates of their choice on an equal basis with other voters. In addition, the BRC considered other factors as topography, geography, cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, and compactness of territory, and communities of interest of the districts.

The BRC's recommended Plan A2 is the end result of these considerations. Plan A2 lowers the total population deviation of the Benchmark Plan from 9.97 percent to 1.69 percent, and is viewed by outside redistricting counsel as being compliant with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act and other legal requirements. In addition, Plan A2 minimizes disruption and change in the current districts, respects communities of interest and does not create any additional city splits. Plan A2 preserves the ability of cohesive minority groups to elect candidates of their choice, but does not use race as a predominant factor in adjusting the boundaries.

The BRC had a very difficult job in reviewing the various plans that were submitted by organizations and members of the public, and a tremendous amount of time and discussion went into Plan A2.

However, I believe the Board can make further improvements to Plan A2 to further unify cities and communities of interest, while complying with the "one-person, one-vote" principle and Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

During the time I have had the privilege of serving the residents of the County of Los Angeles, we have grown to be one of the most racially diverse counties in the nation. I am proud to represent a district that currently has a majority Latino population, as well as Asian-Americans, Whites, African-Americans and several other minority populations. Indeed, with my current proposed revisions to Plan A2, the Latino population in the Fourth District would increase to over 43 percent of our residents.

I therefore propose that further changes be made to Plan A2 as follows:

- 1) *Unite Silverlake into the First District;*
- 2) *Unite unincorporated Florence/Firestone into the Second District;*
- 3) *Unite Playa del Rey into the Fourth District;*
- 4) *Unite unincorporated West Whittier into the Fourth District;*
- 5) *In order to equalize population lost from moving unincorporated Whittier into the Fourth District from the First District, move the City of Claremont and its unincorporated areas into the First District; and,*
- 6) *Balance the population of Districts 3 and 5 by reversing Plan A2's shift of part of West Hills.*

These changes reduce the Latino CVAP numbers in the First District to even lower than in Plan A2. Furthermore, these changes will unify communities of interest, including Florence/Firestone into the Second District and Playa del Rey into the Fourth District.

I appreciate the commitment, hard work and diligence of the BRC and bring these changes forth to further unite communities of interest, while not creating any additional city splits. This plan also meets the goals of our redistricting process – ensuring equality of representation – without dramatic shifts of millions of our residents into new Supervisorial districts.

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